

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method for the determination of multimers of multimer-forming proteins by gel electrophoresis, comprising
fractionating a sample containing von Willebrand factor or fibrinogen into multimer bands by submarine electrophoresis in agarose gel, wherein the agarose gel is
~~using a continuous, homogeneous agarose gel and~~ free of lumps,
visualizing multimer bands by a dye in the gel,
and optionally quantifying the dyed multimer bands.

17. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the dye is a blue stain.

18. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the multimer-forming protein is fibrinogen.

19. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the multimer-forming protein is von Willebrand factor.

20. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the agarose gel comprises an agarose concentration of from 1.6% to 3% by weight.

21. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein the agarose gel comprises an agarose concentration of from 1.8% to 2.4% by weight.

22. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the agarose gel comprises an agarose concentration of from 0.7% to 1.8% by weight.

23. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the agarose gel comprises an agarose concentration of from 0.8% to 1.2% by weight.

24. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the gel electrophoresis is carried out at temperatures between 6° C and 14° C.

25. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the gel electrophoresis is carried out at temperatures between 8° C and 12° C.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein Coomassie blue dye is employed for blue staining of the multimer bands in the gel.

28. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the agarose gel is attached to a backing sheet.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the multimer bands are quantified by densitometry.

31. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the multimer bands are quantified after visualization with the blue stain.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the gel is preserved by lamination after the visualization.

34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the gel is fixed and dried before visualizing the multimer bands ~~the visualization~~.